A FRVITFVLL SERMON VPON

the 3. 4. 5. 6. 7. and 8. verses of the 12. chapter of the Epistle of *Paul* to *the Romanes*.

VERY NECESSARIE for these times to be read of all men for their further instruction and edification in the things concerning their *Faith and Obedience* to Salvation.

1618.

OF THE SERMON.

- These sixe verses, necessarily inserted of the former, containe a perpetuall law touching the government of Christes church: the continuall keeping whereof, as it is the saftie of the body, so the breach of it is the destruction therof. The same is either
  - Generall, appertaining to all the members of the Church, declared by two familiar arguments.
    - One of the contrary unto the law, for the clearer understãding whereof, vers. 3. ioyned in the same sentence with the Law.
    - The other of a similitude, wherin as in a glasse, wee may see the truth & necessity of this law, taken from the naturall disposition of the body, vers. 4. 5.
  - Or special, belõging only to publike persons, that is, either to
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      - 1. Doctors, as in the end of the 7. v.
      - 2. Pastors, as in the beginning of the 8. vers.
    - 2. Officers, occupied about other necessary duties, divided into
      - Deacons, Rulers.
      - Attẽders on the poore.

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verſ. 3. FOR I ſay through the grace which is giuen vnto me, to euery one that is among you, that no man preſume to vnderſtand aboue that which is meet to vnderſtand; but that he vnderſtand according to ſobriety, as God hath dealt to euery man the meaſure of faith.

verſ. 4. For as we haue many members in one body, and all members haue not one office:

verſ. 4. So we being many are one body in Chriſt, and euery one, one anothers.

verſ. 6. Seeing then that wee haue gifts that are divers, according to the grace that is given unto us, whether wee haue propheſie, let us propheſie according to the proportion of faith.

verſ. 7. Or an office: let us wait on the office: or he that teacheth on teaching.

verſ. 8. Or he that exhorteth on exhortation: he that diſtributeth, let him doe it with ſimplicity: he that ruleth with diligence: hee that sheweth mercie, with cheerefulneſſe.

A GODLY SERMON VPON THE TWELFTH CHAPTER OF *PAVL* TO THE ROMANS.

v. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8.

THese sixe verses, necessarily inferred of the former, containe a perpetuall law touching the government of Christs Church: the continuall keeping whereof, as it is the safetie of the body, so the breach of it is the destruction thereof. The same is either generall, appertaining to all the members of the Church, declared by two familiar arguments. One, of the contrary unto the law, for the clearer understanding thereof, vers. 3. ioyned in the same sentence with the law. The other of a similitude, wherein, as in a glasse, we may see the truth and necessity of this law, taken from the naturall disposition of the body, vers. 4. 5. Or it is speciall, belonging onely to the publicke persons: that is, to Prophets, the disposers of the word and secrets of God, whom hee divideth either into Doctors, as in the latter end of the 7. vers. Pastors, as in the beginning of the 8. vers. and officers occupied about either necessary duties, divided into Deacons,

Rulers, Attenders on the poore.

This generall law thus inferred neceſſarily upon the former exhortation, as a moſt ready way, and ordinary meane whereby to haue certaine experience and triall what the good, acceptable, and perfect will of God is, teacheth the duty and way of all Chriſtians, wherein they ought to walke continually without wearineſſe: the giver whereof is no man but God. For albeit *Paul* writ theſe words and this Epiſtle to the Chriſtian Saints at Rome, yet he was but onely the pen-man of the Lords inditement, or (as *Moſes* was) the writer of the Lords law and commandement. For he ſaith not, I by mine owne authority, or by any gift and grace in me: but, *I ſay, Through the grace that is given to me;* meaning (no doubt) that grace of his Apoſtolicall authority, which he, being a blaſphemer, had received of God, to publiſh by word & writing, his will and counſell to the Gentils, that their faith and religion might not bee grounded and builded upon the weake ſand of human traditions, but upon the commandement of Chriſt, the ſtrong rocke and euerlaſting foundation. VVhere it is ſayd, *I ſay*, it is all one in effect as if he ſhould ſay, I command. For this verbe *Lego* in Greeke, as alſo the Hebrew verbe equivalent to the ſame, eſpecially being ioyned to the Infinitiue Mood without an article, is often uſed in that ſence, importing not a bare ſaying or affirmation, but (as here of neceſſitie it muſt, ſeeing the Apoſtle ſheweth not what hath been, is,

or

or ſhall be, but what ought to be) a flat law and commandement. So that for a more plaine demonſtration of the truth, it may be thus expounded and reſolved: For I *Paul*, by the authoritie of my Apoſtleſhip, being a ſingular grace received by the free gift of God, giue unto every one of you this generall law, in the name of him whoſe Apoſtle I am, inviolably and perpetually to be kept, even to the comming of Chriſt.

Thus the Apoſtle maketh his entrance unto the Law with great wiſedome and ſingular diſcretion: for in that hee ſheweth his Law not to proceed from himſelfe, or any other mortall man, but onely from the Lord of hoſts, whoſe Apoſtle he vvas: it doth not onely purchaſe great reverence and credit unto it, but alſo removeth all iuſt occaſion of envie, whereof he might haue been ſuſpected; and of uſurped authoritie, wherewith the enemies of the Goſpell might haue charged him, if he ſhould not this haue done; but now conſidering this law is his, vvho onely is the law-giuer, vvhich is able to ſaue and deſtroy, no man can inſtly contemne it, or think it of ſmall importance. Alſo ſeeing the miniſter hereof vvas called and commanded of this law-giver to vvrite and preach it, no man can ſafely envie and contemne him, or ſuſpect him arrogantly to haue uſurped any unlawfull authority ouer the Romans or the Church of God. Now then if *Paul*, vvho vvas not in any ſpirituall gift neceſſary for his calling, inferiour to the chiefe Apoſtles, thought

it a neceſſary poynt of vviſedome and Chriſtian duty both in reſpect of himſelfe and of the Curch, here and elſe-where, plainly to declare, as well vvho vvas the law-giver, as the authour of his function and Apoſtleſhip: how much more neceſſarie (deere brethren) ought you to think it is for the miniſters in our time, whoſe gifts in cõpariſon of *Pauls*, are verie few and ſmall, to let us ſee, both the authour of their doctrine and lawes, and alſo of their peculiar function? For if they command us any thing, hauing not received it from the Law-giver, by whoſe ſpirit we muſt liue in all obedience of his will, why ſhould we obey? Nay, why may we not caſt it from us as a vaine and fond tradition of man? Againe, if they cannot ſhew us the author of their miniſtery, and the grace they haue received for the godly & acceptable diſcharge thereof: why may we not iuſtly iudge them to be either proud uſurpers of unlawful functions invented of man, or covetous intruders of themſelues into the lawfull callings for the which they are unmeet. I would all thoſe which haue any publicke place in the Church of *England*, ſeeing they vvill not voluntarily follow this vviſedom of *Paul*, might be compelled by the godly vviſe Magiſtrates to ſhew the proofe of their miniſterie out of the word, and the gifts which God hath given them, meet for the diſcharge of their calling. For then I aſſuredly perſwade my ſelf, that the Lord in iuſtice and mercy vvould ſo direct their ſword, that it vvould cut off not onely

onely the head, ſhoulders, armes, legges, and all the rotten members of popiſh religion: but alſo ſhred of frõ the true Church of God and the beloued ſpouſe of Chriſt, all ignorant idle, wicked, and hurtfull hirelings, with all the relikes of Antichriſtian vſurped power, which now to the great and preſent perill of the Lords Vineyard, doe occupie the place and roome of moſt faithfull and painefull vvorkemen. But a fitter place for this matter ſhall be offered hereafter.

It is not to bee omited that *Paul* termeth his Apoſtolicall function. *A grace giuen of God.* For herein he giveth the Romanes and vs in them to underſtand, that if they ſhall reiect, or lightly regard his function, and the precepts he giueth to euerie one of them, by the vertue thereof: That then they openly ſhew themſelues reiectors or light eſteemers, not onely of him and his vvord, but alſo of this grace and gift of God, vvhich after the manner appeareth in him for their ſaluation. The vvhich cogitation might breed in them a reuerent opinion of his perſon, beeing the Ambaſſadour of Chriſt, a Godly care diligentlie to receiue and lovinglie to embrace the grace of God, giuen him, and by him offered vnto them. Here then vve learne vvhat to iudge of thoſe functions vvith their giftes vvhich Chriſt hath giuen for the perfect building vp of his Church: to vvit, as of the excellent and ſingular graces of God. For the office of the Paſtor, and Doctor, and Elder, the

Deacon, the Attender upon the poore and impotent, together with this of the Apoſtle, are all ſtreames flowing from one ſpring or head, by the which the manifold graces of God, and waters of eternall life, are conveyed into his Church, that everie member drinking thereof, ſhould never thirſt againe, but haue full fountaines iſſuing out of him to eternall life. VVherefore let all men, of what calling or authoritie ſoever they be, take heed leaſt by themſelues, by others, or by any other meane, they ſtop and damme up theſe heavenly ſtreames of waters which ſhould runne into the Lords vineyard to water it; or elſe leſt they defile and corrupt theſe waters with caſting into them, and mingling with them the dregges and filthy puddle waters of mans inventions, and Popiſh traditions. For aſſuredly all the ordinary graces of God given to us, are ſuch, and ſo, that they cannot abide either addition, detraction, or change. Such alſo is the giuer hereof, that as he is iealous ouer them, ſo hee will moſt ſeverely revenge himſelfe of all thoſe that ſhall add, detract, or any manner of way corrupt his gifts againſt his will and written word.

Thus wee ſee what profitable inſtruction may bee gathered out of this former part, touching the perſon of *Paul*, the Miniſter or publiſher of this generall Law, as alſo of that ſpeciall which followeth. Now let us heare to whom this generall Law

vvas

was given. To every one of what eſtate and vocation ſoever, that was among the Chriſtians at Rome; and in them, to all that then were, or are now of the houſhould of God. For hee ſaith, *To every one that is among you.* Which is as if hee ſhould ſay, whether you bee Paſtours, or Teachers, Elders, Deacons, or providers for the impotent and ſicke, Fathers, Children, Maſters Servants, bond, free, Iewes, Grecians, publique or private perſons: I giue unto all in generall, and to every one in particular, this generall law and rule of life, charging every one in the ſight of God, to keepe it undefiled to the comming of the Lord and Saviour Chriſt.

Hereby it is manifeſt, that the Law or precept following is generall, not ſpeciall: appertayning to all, not only to ſome; neceſſarie and profitable for all times, not onely cõvenient for that preſent eſtate of the Chriſtian Church at Rome: and therefore perpetually to bee taught and practiſed of Gods Miniſters, learned and obeyed of his people, urged and eſtabliſhed by the power and authoritie of the Magiſtrate his heavenly ordinance. And in ſo doing, the Magiſtrate, the Miniſter, and the people ſhall by their humble ſeruice and ſubiection unto God, both approue their pure conſciences, their ſound and unfaigned faith to all that feare God: and alſo ſtoppe the mouth of the adverſary which ſpeaketh evill of the trueth, becauſe many which outwardly profeſſe it, either

haue not learned, or will not obey this commandement of the Lord.

Now seing wee know the Commandement is from God, and that the Minister hereof, is the chiefest Apostle that euer was and that as it concerned the *Romanes*, so now (they being a sleep in the Lord) it appeareth to all & every one of us, which are here assembled: let us marke first what this generall law is, then according to the Apostles order, what is the speciall derived out of the generall, and to whom it is given.

The law is this, *Phronein eis to Sophronein*, that is, as if he should say, I command in the person of GOD, every one that is among you, to be wise or to understand according to sobriety, as it is translated. As for the words that goe before these, and that follow in this verse, they are no part in this law, but rather a more full and familiar declaration thereof. For where as it is sayd, *That no man presume to understand, aboue that which is meet to understand*, it is a manifest prohibition by a negation of that which is commanded by an affirmation, again where it is sayd, *As God hath dealt to every one the measure of faith*, it is certaine, the purpose of the holy Ghost is, more plainly to declare and expresse, the meaning of his law and generall commandement.

But first of the law it selfe, then of those which serue for the farther declaration thereof. The Greek Verbe which is here translated *Vnderstand*, doth properly signifie to

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be indued with a reasonable mind or soule: wherein because VViſedom and knowledge is, and because shee hath as it were, her mansion house in it, it signifieth also to bee wise: In which signification it is used in this place: and for so much as VViſedom principally consisteth in a discreete moderation and comely order of all actions and works, I take it here to signifie by a trope of the cause, for the effect, the moderate and sober exercise of wisdom and true understanding.

The word translated *Sobrietie*, properly signifieth to haue a sound mind, not troubled with any disease, in which signification it is here used. So that the whole commandement expressed in these two words, appeareth plainely to bee this: I command every one which is among you, truly to understand, soberly to esteeme, soundly to iudge, modestly to use the gifts he hath received of God, being fully contented and satisfied there-with.

VVherefore let us consider, I beseech you, the excellency, the dignitie, the profit and use of this generall Law.

For vvhat can be more excellent, then for every méber of the mysticall body of Christ, truly to know his proper gifts, and vvisely and soberly to esteem and use them? VVhat can be of greater dignity & vvorthines, then for all the people of God scattered through the face of the vvorld, hauing so divers gifts and offices, being so far distant in place, by

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an humble, sober and discreet iudging of their gifts, ability, and callings to serue and worship in the unitie of the spirit and trueth, and in the bond of peace, one true and immortall king of glory. Finally, what can bee more profitable for the Church of Christ our mother, then that all her Children according to their age, strength gifts, place & callings, should without hatred, envy, or any neglect of duety, loue, relieue, and maintiane every one another, as becommeth the dearly beloved children of God? This law well learned, and diligently practised, bringeth with it all these and many moe commodities. Therefore it is not onely in this place, but in many other places of the scripture most faithfully registred. In the booke of *Numbers*, chap. 3. v. 38. we may read and see plainly, how that the Lord did not onely by precept distinguish between the calling of the Levits and people, but threatneth the transgressors and inordinate walkers with death. For the Levits were either called Priests, or by the common name of Levits. If Priests, then either the high Priest, as *Aaron* and *Eleazer* after him: or such as were under him ouer the rest, as *Eliazaph* the overseer of the *Gershonites*, or *Elizaphan* the overseer of the *Coathithes*, and *Zuriel* of the *Merarites*. Their office was publickly to teach, to pray, to offer sacrifice, to keep the vessels of the sanctuarie. The office of the other Levits was to minister and serue the Priests in all things belonging to the discharge of their necessary duties.

duties. And this is the distinction betweene the office of Priest, and the office of the Levit. Hereby therefore it appeareth, that the Lord alloted unto every one his severall office, to be as it were his standing place, out of the which he should not step one foot, either to the left hand or to the right, neither dislike his place, but fully content himselfe therewith, without envying of any, that were in more excellent roomes. And as the Lord knew this order of distinguishing offices to be very expedient and good for his Church: so he hath revenged himselfe most severely upon the breakers hereof, of what calling soever they were, or with what affection or intent soever they did transgresse this established order of government. King *Azaria*, as we read in the second of the Chronicles, the 26. chapter, otherwise called *Vzzia*, was stricken with uncurable leprosie; because, lifting up his heart, he usurped the office of the Priest, and went into the Temple to burne incense upon the Altar. *Vzza* for supporting the Arke, which was the onely office of the Levits, notwithstanding his good intent, (for the Oxen did shake the Arke) was stricken with sudden death. *Corah*, *Dathan*, and *Abiram*, because they presumed aboue their vocation, went down aliue into the pit; for the earth opened her mouth, & swallowed them up with all that they had. All vvhich ought to teach us, how acceptable this order of severall callings is to God, and to breed in our hearts both a care and a conscience

ence to keepe it, and a feare and terrour to breake it.

But least any should imagine this distinction of vocations to serue onely for the law, hauing no vse or profit vnder the gospel: let vs search the new Testament. VVas there no difference (I pray you) betweene *Iohn Baptist*, and his Disciples, and the Disciples of Christ; None betweene them and other Christians, that were Baptized and followed Christ: None between the Prophet and Apostle, betweene the Pastor and the Deacon: VVhat, were all Apostles? VVere all Prophets? Had all the gifts of healing? VVere all Teachers? Or did all interpret? VVhat, was the bodie one member? No, no, the Lord hath ordained in his church many members, yet but one bodie. VVherby it is certaine, that as it pleased God vnder the law to establish this distinction of callings in *Israel;* So hath hee done now under the Gospell in the new *Ierusalem*. For our Apostle in the 11. to the *Corinth*. the 2. Epistle, straightlie chargeth euerie one to walk in that calling, wherein he is. His words are these: *Let euerie man abide in that same vocation VVherein he was called.* Again a litile after, *Let euerie man wherein he was called therein abide VVith God.* In which words hee teacheth that the most excellent gifts of a Christian, which wee by faith receiue of Christ, and the eternall seed of regeneration, cannot, neither ought to moue vs, to loath our former calling be be it neuer so low or base,

base, neither to desire to step vnto any other, till it please God to offer vnto vs some iust and necessarie cause of change, and to adde vnto the common gifts of a christian, some speciall which are proper and peculiar, for that lawfull calling whereunto our desires are wholy and onely carried, and the Lord effectuallie calleth vs. But least any should obiect that this general law is not so straightly to be kept of all: besides that the words of this text will confute him, he may read the 17. verse of the 7. Chapter to the *Corinthians*. Or if he proceed and say, it is no ordinance established, or not in all Churches, the verie words of the text there will ouerthrow him. *But as God hath distributed to euerie man as the Lord hath called euerie one, so let him walke, and so I ordain in all Churches.* Then wee see in effect, what this generall Law is: Namely, that as Souldiers in war haue and keepe euerie one his standing place in the sight of their Captaine: so euery Christian should haue and keepe his seuerall calling in the presence of the Lord of life: who hath in wisedome and mercie called them thereunto. For if they do not, as experience teacheth in war and in peace, then they must needs tumble and indanger themselues, vex and grieue others, hurt and disquiet the church whose peace and felicitie, all her Children ought to redeeme, euen with the losse of blood and life. O that this law where deepely printed and grauen in the hearts of all Christians, & were as easilie to be learned

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and seene in our liues, as it may bee in this precept, then we should see with no small ioy the Church our mother with cheerful countenãce to lift up her head, which now to the grief of many, hangeth very low, and whose hart lamenteth the looſnes, ſecurity, the aſpiring & unquiet minds, & the continual diſorder of her childeren, which had rather do any thing, then that which principally concerneth them. For if it be demaunded from whence commeth all this diſorder, at home, abroad, in publike and priuate perſons, in common-wealth, and in the Church, in Vniuerſities, and in cities: the cauſe is euident, no man can deny it: father and child, huſband and wife, maſter and ſeruant, rich and poore, magiſtrate and ſubiect, Paſtor and people, haue broken & tranſgreſſed this generall law and commandemẽt of God. They know not truly their gifts and callings, they haue not humby, ſoberly, eſteemed of them, they haue not wiſely, diſcreetly, and with a ſingle eye iudged themſelues: they haue not with care & conſcience diſcharged their duty to God: Finally, they haue broken out of their ſtanding places, and burſt aſunder the liſts of their callings, & cannot, neither will be bound to order and obedience, no not with bonds of their Creators law. The cauſes of all this diſorder in all degrees, ſhall appeare, and be declared in their proper places next following, as alſo the remedies wherby it may be remoued, and good order (the health of both the bodies) reſtored and brought a-

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gain into the Church and common-wealth.

It followeth in the text: *That no man presume to understand aboue that which is meete* Paul declareth this generall Law; first as you see, by the contrary, that wee might the better understand and see by this negation, what he meant by the affirmation: and also that we might wisely collect the cause of the former disorder, whereof I haue spoken. A wise and usuall order in exhorting, obserued of the Prophets, having regard not what ought to be first in knowledge, but first in practise: not respecting the perfection of order, but the corruption of our nature. For we being full of pride, selfe-loue, vayne-glory, arrogancy and ambition, it is necessary that this hard and brazen wall, made and grounded upon the hard brazen pillers of originall concupiscence, should first be cast down and digged up, with the ground-work thereof, before we can see and feele the sweet grace of God, and the comfortable presence of his spirit, in humbling our proud harts, and working in our minds a sound iudgement. VVe must therefore, for the better keeping of the generall law, cast off these two burdens that presse us down, *Over-weening of our gifts*, and *Ambition*, which make the minde not content with her own estate and calling. For as darkenesse and light cannot dwell in one place at one time: so pride and humility, ambition and godly contentation cannot dwell in one man. So long as pride that blindeth our eyes, and a disliking of our estate

poſſeſſe the heart, there is no place for
humble and ſound iudgement, no roome f
an affection contented to reſt in that portio
which God hath allotted unto us. The ble
ſed Apoſtle ſeeing this, chargeth the *Roma*
to put out and diſpoſſeſſe their hearts of tho
two enemies: wherein, albeit they had the
abode ſince the fall of our firſt Parents, ye
being uſurpers, they muſt be thruſt out, tha
Chriſt, whoſe we are, and he ours by the e
ternall covenant, may dwell in us, and we
in him for ever. They be ſtrong men, an
therfore will not be diſpoſſeſſed by any wea
power: only they will giue place to the forc
& powerfull hand of a ſtronger: that is, to th
ſpirit of God, which filleth up the low vallie
and caſteth down the high mountaines. A
they be ſtrong to keep poſſeſſion, ſo they b
ſtrong to ſtrike, to wound, to ſlay and deſtro
both the Eccleſiaſticall and Politick bodie
of the Church & Common-wealth. For from
theſe two peſtilent fountains, ſelfe-loue an
ambition flow, envying of the good, bitte
contention and ſtriuing with the equall, diſ
daine and contempt of the inferiours. Hence
it is, that the governors of the Church thin
ſo well of themſelues, not humbly beggin
the direction of Gods ſpirit, but expound th
word according to their own fancies: tha
they deſire to rule as they liſt: deuiſe new of
fices, confound thoſe which the Lord hath
wiſely diſtinguiſhed: challenge unto them
ſelues new titles, new names, princely pre
rogatiues, and vnlawfull iuriſdiction ouer
their

their brethren. All which vices, as they ſprung vp firſt in the church of *Rome*, (notwithſtanding this admonition of *Paul*, for thepreuenting of them) ſo hauing now deadly wounded the bodie, and wholie deſtroyed and defaced the Church, they haue ſpred their bowes and branches into many places of the Lords vineyard, wherin they haue taken ſuch deep root, that it is to be feared, that as they now do ouerſhadow the tender plants of the orchard of God, ſo they will in time conſume and deſtroy the whole growth, with the poyſon, of their corruption, except they be plucked vp by the rootes. For my part, examining the matter with an indifferent mind, I can ſe no other roote whence theſe rotten and vnnatural bowes ſhould ſpring, then this high and lofty minde, whereby men do preſume to thinke of themſelues, & of the treaſure of which they haue, more then they ought to do. VVhy would not *Diotrephes* receiue *Iohn* and the other faithfull miniſters of the word? wherefore did he prattle with malicious words againſt them? why would he neither himſelfe receiue, nor ſuffer others to entertain the brethren? was not this the only cauſe, becauſe he loved to haue the preeminence in the Church? Read the 3. Epiſtle of *Iohn*. VVhat cauſed the Scribes & Phariſes to contemne & diſdain the baſe eſtate & low degree of Chriſt & his poore Diſciples? they loved the chiefe places at feaſts, and deſired the chiefe ſeat in the aſſemblies, and greeting in the markets, & to be called of men *Rabbi*,

Rabby: was not this becauſe they were high-minded? VVhy did *Iames* and *Iohn*, and their mother, moved by them, deſire to be chiefeſt in the kingdom of Chriſt? or why did the other diſciples diſdaine at this requeſt? was it not onely becauſe their hearts were puffed up with pride, vain-glory, and ambition? VVhy did ſome preach to add affliction unto *Pauls* bonds? was it not becauſe they thought better of themſelues and their gifts, then of him and his gifts? and by enuying him troubled the Church? O therfore how neceſſary it is for us that be of the Church, to beat downe this brazen wall of pride, preſumption, and ambition, which cauſeth all theſe diſorders among us, that God may reare up in our hearts, the new fortreſſe of a ſound, diſcreet, humble and ſober mind, and ſo make us ſincere obſervers of this generall law. All theſe things I haue ſpoken, do ſufficiently teach, how ſome Churches haue been, and are at this day ſore wounded, others deſtroied by theſe two horrible monſters, of *Pride* and *Ambition*, which will not be ſubiect to any; nay which will, if they be ſuffered, lift up their heads into the throne of the Lord. Now to the Commonwealth, wherein if we ſhall aske the wiſeſt men of all ages that be paſt, either religious or prophane, they wil teil you that which by long and certaine experience they haue learned: namely, that this proud and ambitious ſurpriſing of gifts, diſliking of mens proper dealings, haue been the diſturbers, I might ſay, the deſtroyers of Families, Tribes, Towns

Cities,

Citties, Kingdomes, and Empires. So *Moſes, Iehoſua, Dauid,* and the Prophets, haue left in their writings this to bee learned of ſuch as will read them. The prophane writers, both Grecians and Romans, which haue regiſtred the diverſities, changes, overthrows and ruines of Common-wealths, doe teach the ſame better then the time will ſuffer me particularly to rehearſe. But to omit the ancient Monuments and Hiſtories of the old time, and to come to our owne country: did ever any man harden his heart here in *England* againſt lawfull Regiment: which hath not been full of pride and ambition? Can the ſober minded man, reſting and taking his felicitie in his baſe and low calling, lift up his hand to plucke the Regall crowne from the head of the lawfull governour? No, no, dearely beloved, no more then a heavy ſtone can aſcend into the higheſt Region of the firmament. It is the light head and the aſpiring minde, vvhich through pride and ambition, flieth into the Princes pallace. Seeing then that theſe two vices of *Pride* and *Ambition,* doe not onely eternally condemne ſuch as are infected vvith them (vvhich is moſt fearfull) but alſo vvound and deſtroy the fociety of the ſaints, & the pollicy of kingdoms: ſeeing that the Lord by his Apoſtle here, doth ſo ſtraightly forbid them, as the moſt dangerous enemies of this generall law: I am to charge you in the name of Chriſt, from the higheſt to the loweſt, to throw downe your ſelues before the Maieſty of GOD, cra-

ving earneſtly the graceof his ſpirit to mortifie theſe evill affections, ſo that they may haue in them neither poyſon to kill the ſoule, nor power to hurt the Church or common wealth. And for you that are the miniſters of God, and our governours, if you will learn how to eſtabliſh this generall law, and to remedy all the abuſes thereof, behold this muſt bee your wiſedom. Firſt pluck up by the roots through out the miniſtry of the word, and the authority of the ſword, all proud and high looks, arrogant & ambitious perſons: ſet before your eyes the godly zeal of *David*, *Him* (ſaith he) *that hath a proud looke and high heart, I cannot ſuffer*. Again, *Betimes will I deſtroy all the wicked in the land, that I may cut off all the workers of iniquitie from the City of the Lord.* O that all her Maieſties Counſell, and all other Magiſtrates in this Land, had kindeled in their breaſts, ſuch a zeale of Gods glory, ſuch a hatred of all ſin, namely of pride and ambition, and ſuch a loue of his ſober and ſound iudgment, which breedeth humbleneſſe of heart, and a mind fully contented with any eſtate: whereunto the Lord calleth us. Secondarily aboue all things, it behoveth you that bee the Lords ſervants in Magiſtracy, to eſtabliſh every one within his charge and iuriſdiction, this generall law: providing that every man haue wherein to occupy himſelfe and his gifts, according to the tenor of the law, in his own ſtanding, place aud vocation: and that he do diſcharge it according to the meaſure & proportion

portion of his gifts, which he hath received for that purpose. For none in the Church & house of God must want his office: none must walk inordinatly: none must bee idle in his calling, or unprofitable. As therefore you know your enemies, and how to vanquish them, and also the Law of the Lord, how to establish it: take heed unto your selues & dally not in the Lords matters. For if you shall not betimes by the sword of iustice, cut off all that deserue death by the Law, not suffering your eye to take pittie upon any, & also correct other malefactors according to their desert, without partiality, know for certainty that the iust God will require their bloud at your hands. Againe, if you shall prefer your own pollicies, and devices, before the establishing of this generall law of God, assure your selues that your Lord and master whose person you sustain, will never suffer such contempt of him unpunished. Therefore as you hate these vices, and all other sins, as you loue this undefiled law of the Lord, let your hatred be shewed in abolishing the one, & your loue declared in establishing the other: it foloweth.

As God hath dealt to euery one the measure of faith. This sentence sheweth what it is to be wise according to sobriety, or to haue such understāding that a man may soundly iudge. It is as if he should say, hereby ye shall know what it is to be wise according to sobriety, if you marke and consider that God hath given to every one severally a certaine proper and peculiar measure of Faith, that is, of

any heavenly gift, divers from the gift of regeneration, which ought to be imployed in the increase of your mutuall faith. For here the Apostle giveth no precepts how these Christians should best provide for their own safety, (for that he hath done, and doth hereafter more particularly) but how they may best provide for the safety of the Church, and every member thereof, vvhich is done by keeping our selues within the cõpasse of the gift vvhich God hath given, neither esteeming of it of greater value then it is, neither desiring to stretch it further, and to a more excellent high calling then it is given for; neither yet by not seeing, or too abiectly thinking of that gift vvhich we haue, or else envying others which haue the same gift in greater measure. Then the proper sence is this: Look what certain and proper gift of grace, God hath given to any of you, not for your private profit, but for the publick good and benefite of the body, in humble iudgement, discreet wisedom, & soundnesse of mind, consider and think upon it, be thankfull for it, let that be your sober wisedome, let that content and satisfie your hearts, not extending it further then it can reach, not over-pressing it, nor thinking too basely of it: not envying others which haue either other greater gifts, or the same gift in a greater measure. For seeing God in his excellent and incomprehensible wisedom, hath disposed both divers gifts to divers men, and the same gifts in a divers measure, to the profit, peace, and preservation of his

his people: as the misliking of this heauenly and wise dispensation proceedeth of great folly, insolencie, and want of iudgement: so the disordering, confounding and corrupting the gifts, must needs tend to the ruine and utter overthrow of the Church. For consider I beseech you (deare brethren) if every member of our body should either stretch his gifts further then they can reach as if the hand would needs see and direct the body, if it would speake. &c. or if the head would go: again if the hãd should think it selfe of greater excellency then the head, or if through envie of the greater gifts of the eyes, which are more excellent, it would deny to do the office of the hand: or finally, if the left hand, having the same gift which the right hath, would envie it, because it is more apt, quick and ready in the use of the same: would we not cry out of this confusion, as most unnaturall and monstruous, and such as without all doubt, would utterly destroy the whole body? Nevertheles we see in the Churches of England, which professe themselues parts of the whole, and are not astonished. We haue seen it a long time, & yet we cannot be unfaignedly grieved: wee can not be perswaded to feare and tremble, at the present perill which hangeth over our heads. For alasse, must we not looke for the heavy hand of the Lord, when we see many ignorant men, not only void of all skil in the Hebrew, Greek, and Latin tongues, in Logick, Rhethorick, and other Arts: (but also

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which I am aſhamed to ſpeake) both void of the knowledge of the doctrine of repentance and alſo wicked and lewd in life, who are yet ſo bold, ſo impudent, of ſo hard faces, that they dare preſent themſelues to the learned Biſhops, and ſo extend and ſtretch out, I wil not ſay their gifts, which they haue not, nor the ſhadow of a gift: to take vpon them the high embaſſage of their God: to carry to his people the glad tidings of ſaluation, which Chriſt hath purchaſed for them with his moſt precious bloud. O ſhameleſſe impudencie? Shall hee take vpon him to hold the helm, that is ſcarce worthy to ſit in the ſinke? O damnable boldneſſe, O couetous Patrones? that for gaine preſent ſuch unworthy men to the Biſhops? O fooliſh men that will commend them whom they ought to diſpraiſe: O miſerable Biſhops, that by laying on of their hands, lift vp thoſe into Moſes chaire who ought rather to be thruſt to the tail of the plow! VVhat doth more diſhonour God, diſcredit the Goſpell, confirm the aduerſaries of the trueth, and incourage the Rebell in his treaſon, then this ignorance and impietie of the Miniſters? For I beſeech you tell me: can the honour and praiſe of Gods wiſdome, be commended by the follie and ignorance of his Miniſter? Can the ineſtimable treaſure and riches of the gratious Prince, bee ſeen in the beggarly nakedneſſe of an vngracious and baſe ambaſſadour? Can the aduerſaries of the grace of Chriſt, by looking vpon an Idoll, which

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hath nothing but a ſhew of that it is not, be diſwaded from the worſhip of Idolles? Can he bring men from error, which can teach no truth? Can he that is traiterouſlie affected to Magiſtracie, become a loyall Subiect, and neuer heare his Paſtour prooue by the word of God, that all muſt be ſubiect, not onely for feare, but for conſcience ſake? Finally, can the carnall minded man, and the plaſphemous Atheiſt bee perſwaded, that Chriſt is the redeemer of the world, whoſe Miniſters theſe be? Therefore as all Chriſtians are priuatly to look vnto themſelues, their gifts and callings, that they tie and binde their iudgment and affection to the meaſure of that faithfull grace they haue receiued: ſo all Magiſtrates are by the ſworde of their authority, which they beare not in vaine, to keepe and hold their Chriſtian Subiects within the compaſſe of their limites.

Now foloweth the laſt reaſon of the generall law: *For as we haue manie members in one bodie, and all members haue not one office: ſo wee being many are but one bodie in Chriſt, and euerie one, one anothers members.* This laſt reaſon taken from the mutuall diſpoſition of the body, is by the Apoſtle applied, not onely to the Saints at Rome, but alſo generallie to the whole Church of Chriſt, which as it teacheth an vnitie of body, a multitude of members vnder one head, a variety of duties, and a diuerſitie of gifts: ſo it ſheweth manifeſtlie, that this diſtinction in the bodie whereof ariſeth the gouernment

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of the whole, making for the safetie of the whole and euery part, is most necessary, most profitable: and therefore perpetuall & immutable, In consideration wkereof, I will lay out the parts more plainely, least any should take upon him through presumption a greater charge then he can sustaine, or the measure of his gifts permit, and the rather, for that there are in these two uerses 4. similitudes, albeit at the first view, there seemeth to bee but one. The first is, as wee haue in one naturall body many members: so wee haue in one Catholick Church, many members. The second, as all members of the naturall body, haue not one office, so all the members of the Church, haue not one office. The third, as many members in the naturall body haue one head, wherin they are: so many members in the Church haue one head, wherein they are. The fourth and last, as in a naturall body, every member is anothers: so in the Church, every member is anothers. All which particular similitudes are necessarily collected out of the Apostles words, in the 4, & 5. verses, as you may plainly see. The same similitudes, though not in the same words, yet to the same purpose, our Apostle useth in the twelfth Chapter of the first Epistle to the Corinthians, saying: *As the body is one, & hath many members, & all the members of the body, which is one, though they bee many yet are but one body, euen so is Christ*: that is the Church of Christ. He prosecuteth it farther, as wee shall hereafter see. But first let us

us some what more diligently consider according to these foure similitudes, of the estate, condition and regiment of the Church of Christ here in earth: for hence arise foure most excellent and worthie rules, touching the spirituall government of the mystical body of Christ, The first is this: There must be and ought to be in the Church of Christ many members. The first similitude teacheth this? the 12. to the Corinth, doth conclude and determine it: *For the body is not one member, but many*: Again, *if they were all one member where were the body? but now there are many members, yet but one body.* Therefore there must bee many members in the Church. By a member he meaneth such a part of the body as hath received from the head, some particular and necessary gift, fit to helpe and benefit the whole body, and every member thereof, as it appeareth by the last similitude and by the enumeration of the parts immediatly following,

Now if you aske me, how many members there be in the body: what they be: and how they be named and called: and what bee their duties and callings: the Apostl himselfe will answer plainly in the next verses, and perfectly and fully determine all these questions, saying: These members are either Doctors to teach, Pastors to exhort, Elders to rule, Deacons to distribute, Attenders upon the pore, strangers and the sick: or else the people and Saints which are taught, exhorted, ruled, and receiue almes and releeue, These are all:

all: no moe, no fewer. So the neceſſity of the relation plainly proveth, and theſe are ſuch as are able to execute and performe any duety belonging to the perfect building up, and adorning of the miſticall body of Chriſt, as ſhall hereafter appeare more at large, in the particular handling, of every ſeverall office.

Now I beſeech you, let us iudge indifferently of the body of the Church of *England*, whether it be perfect or no, having no want of any neceſſary member, nor any part vnneceſſary. For if nature lacke any one, be it never ſo baſe, if it be but one toe, ſhe is ſory, ſhe is grieved, ſhe lamenteth, ſhe iudgeth herſelf maimed: yea, ſhe would redeeme it with the perill of looſing the reſt: ſuch is her loue and deſire to appeare in her beauty & perfection. The Church of God in *England* (deare Ghriſtians) which is the beloved ſpouſe of Chriſt, which deſireth to appeare moſt beautiful and perfect in the eyes of her loue: ſhe wanteth her Paſtors, Teachers, Elders, Deacons and her attenders upon the poore, therefore ſhe hangeth downe her head for heavineſſe, her eyes be bleared with teares, her cheekes be defiled with the water of her eyes, her heart, is heauy with ſorrow, her bones are withered with drineſſe, her whole body is cloathed in ſackcloth, ſhe lieth in caues and dens, being almoſt aſhamed to ſhew her face, having ſo deformed and maimed a body, *Which ought to be as bright as the Sun, and as faire as the Moone: yea, of ten thouſand the chiefeſt*: Againe, on the other ſide, if nature doe eſpy

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in the body any ſuperfluous member, as if ſhe haue three hands, three feet, or ſix fingers, by and by ſhe miſliketh herſelfe, ſhe hateth the ſuperfluity, ſhe laboureth to cut it off, becauſe ſhe is contented with herſelfe, deſiring no mo parts then ſhe hath: nay, hating if it be but a knob of fleſh, that is more thē needs. She would haue many members, but not too many: ſhe would haue all her members, ſhe would want none, leſt ſhe ſhould apear either mōſtrous, which is fearfull, or maimed, which is hatefull. Even ſo is it with the Church & ſpouſe of Chriſt in *Englād*: for as ſhe is grieued for the lack of thoſe parts which are wāting, ſo ſhe abhorreth & loatheth ſuch as are abounding: as namely the callings of Archbiſhops, Deanes, Archdeacons, Deacons, Chācellors, Commiſſaries, Officials, & all ſuch as be rather members and parrs of the whore & ſtrumpet of *Rome*, then of the pure virgin & ſpouſe of the immaculate Lambe. Therefore ſhe deſireth theſe (if they will needs be of the body) to ſhew that they be created of God, and uniredto her by Chriſt ber head. If they will needs bee of the heavenly Ieruſalem, let them ſhew that they came downe from heaven, & who gaue them from thence? For the Apoſtles never knew them, Syon hath not heard of them: Ieruſalem which is aboue, wil not acknowledge thē: the watchmen (no doubt) being aſleep, they haue crept into the Citty of the Lord. But now they are eſpied: now the church complaineth of them, both becauſe they haue no title, nor intereſt

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in it as publique members: and alſo becauſe by the length of their vnlawful ſwords, they keepe out lawful members of the bodie. VVe therefore that are the Lords remẽbrancers muſt neuer let him reſt, till he haue expelled them out of Hieruſalem, wherein they haue no right to exerciſe ſuch vnlawful authority. Therefore we humbly deſire and beſeech all that are in high place, and haue acceſſe vnto her excellent Maieſty, that they would for the loue they beare to the Church of Chriſt, in tender cõpaſſion look upon our Churches, which maketh ſo iuſt a complaint: that they would ſend for the Preachers of the VVord: enquire what is lacking, and what is too much: and ſo repaire and builde vp the walles of Hieruſalem, the praiſe of the world.

The ſecond rule is, that the members of the body muſt haue but one office: that is, euery one his ſeuerall and diſtinct office. For God is not the authour of confuſion, but of good order, and neceſſary diſtinction. *So ſaith Paul, there are diuerſitie of gifts, of adminiſtrations, & of operations: yet but one ſpirit, one Lord, one God Wch worketh all in all.* 1. *Cor.* 12. 49. And leſt any ſhould obiect, that this may be, & yet no let but that one man hauing many gifts, may haue diuers offices; for though they be diuers one in reſpect of another, yet they may agree in one man: we muſt conſider the Apoſtle ſpeaketh here, of diuers members of one body, & meaneth that euery one muſt haue his ſeuerall gift that maketh a ſeuerall office for the common profit of others. This

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ſeuerall and ſpecial gift bindeth to one ſeuerall and ſpeciall office. For the ſame Apoſtle teacheth, that thoſe gifts are not only diſtinguiſhed in nature, but alſo in perſon: ſaying, *To one is giuen the word of Wiſdome, vnto another the word of knowledge, &c.* Therefore euery perſon or member of the Church muſt haue his own proper and ſeuerall office, that he may vſe it to the common commoditie of all his fellow members. If the naturall members of the bodie do perfectly performe their ſeuerall duties, then it muſt needs goe well with the bodie, and nature muſt needes delight and take great pleaſure in it: but if contrarily one member do incroch vpon the office of another, it muſt needs tend to the deſtruction of the bodie. So aſſuredly the eſtate of the Church is beſt, and moſt floriſheth when there is neither too many, nor too few mẽbers, according to the firſt rule, neither confuſion of offices according to the ſecond. Seing then (beloued) in our Church the Deacons encrocheth vpon the office of the Paſtor (for he praieth openly & miniſtreth the Sacraments) women vpon the office of men (for they Baptize) priuate men vpon the office of publique perſons (for one man doth ſuſpend from the Sacramentes & excommunicate) the Doctor vpon the office of the Paſtour (for both indifferently teach exhort, and adminiſter the Sacraments) the Eccleſiaſticall perſon vpon the office of the ciuill Magiſtrate: and contrarily, the ciuill vpon the Eccleſiaſticall (for they enter-

change:-

changeably handle and descide civill and Ecclesiasticall controversies) seeing I say, here is no distinction, but confusion: no contenting with one duety, but encroching vpon many, no wise order in governement, but a foolish and pernicious shuffeling together of divers duties, which the Lord hath here and elsewhere, in sundry places of his word distinguished: haue wee not iust and necessary cause to beseech and pray such as be in authoritie, not to suffer their eye-lids either to slumber or sleep till they haue removed these superfluities, supplied these wants and reformed this intollerable confusion, that the bodie of the Church may appear in her perfect beauty and health?

The third rule is, these many members must haue but one head, to whom they are most neerely and surely united, and of whom they must be only and perpetuallie ruled. All the parts of the naturall bodie, because they are by many ioynts and bands fitly and surely coupled to the head, they receive life, sence, power motion and strength to performe their duties, and mutually to helpe one another, & all this is done by the vertue of this naturall union. For if that were not, no part were able to serue either it selfe, or any other: so that being in this union they liue, being seuered they die & perish. Euen so it fareth with the mẽbers of the Church: for they beeing by spirituall ioynts and bands surely united and knit to Christ their head, he conveyeth into every one by his spirit and faith

faith, life to quicken them, wisedome to lighten them, sence for feeling, and all other graces, and strength to defend them against all aduersary power, and to bring them to the perfect vnion and fellowship, which is in himselfe. VVe are the tender branches, he is the vine: if we be in him, we shal receiue the spirituall nourishment to life euerlasting, and all things that appertaine to our health, if we be out of him, we cannot but die, & that eternally. Hee onely is the vine whereunto we must be grafted: he only is the band that bindeth vs vnto him: the branches that are not in the vine, must needs wither and die: if he bind vs not vnto himselfe, we must needs scatter abroade, aud fall asunder one from another. Hee onely is the cause of all union with himselfe, and among the members, to make all the members at one with him, and with themselues. And also to take away all difference & discord, he hath given not a pope nor an Archbishop, or Bishop, (for there was perfect union before they were, though they falsly beare us in hand, that they are for the maintenance of peace and unitie) but Apostles, Evangelists, Prophets, Pastours, and Teachers, by whose ministrie wee may bee fully lead to a perfect unity of faith in Christ, and to the full age of the fulnesse of him. So that he alone by his owne gifts, must keepe all the members of his Church in perfect unitie, and by them also remoue all iarring in iudgement, and all discord in affection. The which harmony no Pope, Archi-

biſhop, Angell, or any other creature can make. O that wee might once heare this pleaſant ſound and tune of this harmonie. The primitiue Church they heard it, yea, they ſo delighted in it, that Saint *Luke* ſo often repeateth it, as though the very bare repetition thereof had wonderfully pleaſed: to wit, that the Apoſtles, Diſciples, and all continued together in one place, with one accord, with one iudgement, with one minde, with one heart. O heavenly harmonie and unity, before ever that Pope, Archbiſhop, or any ſuch ſtrange calling were hatcht. Therefore we are to beſeech the Honourable Councellours to labour night and day, till it be graunted unto us, that wee may haue liberty, bnt once to make triall & experience, whether we cannot, onely by the Lords gifts, & by thoſe graces which deſcended and came down from the head, ſet in time all the members of the Church, that we may once againe heare the firſt ſong of the firſt Church, planted by the Apoſtles: the which if we can, (as no doubt the Lord will giue us to do) I am perſwaded, as he wil preferre it before all other harmonies that haue been, ſo we ſhall reſt in it without wearineſſe or deſire of change.

Againe, if all the members ſubmit themſelues to the 'government of the head, and onely follow it, then there can be neither deſire of rule, nor breach of any good order. But the admitting of two heads and divers lawes, as it maketh a monſtrous body, ſo a contrary

government

government, both which nature and good reaſon miſlike and condemne. Yea though not altogether, yet in ſome part we ſee theſe diſorders in our Church. For what elſe is the ſole authority of one private man, to rule over his fellow-brethren, to chide them, to correct them, to puniſh them, to ſuſpend them ſtom their office, yea and that which nothing appertaineth to him, to impriſon them. And I beſeech you tell me, do they all this by the lawes of Chriſt?

Surely (deere Chriſtians) we muſt and will appeale unto their honors, from theſe unlawfull iuriſdictions: if we teach falſe doctrine, let us in the preſence of her Maieſty, & them all, be confuted: if we haue offended, we refuſe no puniſhment. VVe are called, nay we are ſlandered of the Papiſts and others, with the divelliſh ſect of *Puritans*: we are thought to beare ſcarce good will unto her Maieſtie. VVell, howſoever men iudge of us, we are that we are, by the grace of God, and for my ſelfe I will anſwer (& I am perſwaded that all that be of my iudgement are of the ſame mind) touching my loue & affection towards my Soveraigne & gracious Prince. I proteſt here before God, his Angels, and you all, that to ſaue her Maieſties life, I would giue my my right hand: what ſaid I? Nay aſſuredly, as the Lord liueth to prolong her life but one houre, I would powre out all the bloud in my heart, though it ſhould run a thouſand yeare. And I perſwade my ſelfe moreover, that if her Maieſty ſhould heare and know the grounds

of this doctrine, we ſhould not long pray in vaine for the reformation of the Church.

The fourth and laſt rule is, every member muſt bee one anothers member: that is, having a peculiar office, ſerving to the benefite of all the members, that by diligence and loue muſt be imployed for the preſervation of the whole body, and not for our own profit. For even the leaſt and baſeſt member is neceſſary, and therefore not to be neglected or to be deſpiſed. This rule as it requireth a diligent and continual ſervice of every member, ſo it condemneth all idleneſſe, and neglect of duty. If the members of the naturall body ſhould faile in their ſeverall duties, would wee not by and by iudge, that there were in them either want of loue unto others, or inability in nature, and alſo that this defect would tend in the end to the deſtruction of the body? I am ſure you will grant it. VVhat ſhall wee ſay then of the members of our Church, which are ſo idle in their callings, may we not moſt iuſtly condemne them for want of loue? For loue is the bond of perfection, which bindeth together the hearts of the Saints by her labour and travell ſhe taketh, in helping and relieving them: ſhe ſeemeth not her own, ſhe refuſeth no paine, ſhe feareth no perill, ſhe diſdaineth no baſeneſſe, ſo that the members and Saints of Chriſt may bee bettered by her. But alaſſe where is ſhee in our Churches? verily ſhe commeth not abroad into our ſtreets, ſhe ſheweth not herſelfe in our aſſem-

assemblies, shee appeareth not in the Pulpit daily, she is faine to hide herselfe in certain corners of the Church. For seeing some preach not at all, some seldom, some haue mo charges then is possib'e for thē to discharge; some seek dispensations, some faculties, some sue for commendams, some one thing, some another: can we think they perswade themselues to be members of others, servants to other members, and not to themselues onely? they haue hands, eyes, and eares, but they reach to themselues, not to other: they see for themselues not for others: they heare also, but not for others.

Moreover, where it is said, that *Wee are one anothers members*, we must know, that in despising others wee despise our selues, and hurt our selues: for wee depriue our owne soules of those benefits which other should minister unto us for our health and peace. VVe ought then rather to nourish and cherish them, because we may reap great good of them. But such is the blindnes and senceles dulnesse of many in our church, that they esteeme nothing of the members, that the Lord hath given and ordained for their singular commodity. God hath given us in great mercy, Pastors and Doctors to bee our eyes, to lead and direct us in the wayes of truth and holinesse. Elders and Deacons to be our hands, to keepe us and hold us iu the way, & also to reach unto us those things we want: Attenders upon us, to be our feet when we are not able otherwise to goe. And

yet (O Lord) we deſpiſe them, wee deride them: nay, that which is incredible, though they be the Lords owne gifts, wee will not be perſwaded, that they will or can do us any good, or bring any ornament to the body. The Lord for his mercies ſake open our eyes, that we may ſee and mollifie our ſtony hearts, that we may loue our fellow-members, and ſerue them in tender compaſſion for ever. For alaſſe, this is a miſery, and a great vexation of the ſpirit, that many Churches haue neither eyes, nor hands, nor feete: ſome haue blind eyes, and maimed hands, and yet no man lamenteth: no man weepeth for the miſery of Syon, no man goeth about to reſtore her to her perfect proportion and comely beauty.

Thus you ſee this generall Law what it is, the two declarations thereof, the contrary and ſimilitudes, how excellent, how vvorthy, how profitable, how certaine, conſtant, and unchangeable. For as it is in the body, ſo in the Church, keepe all, preſerue all, keepe ſome, keepe none, preſerue none: change one, ſome, or all, then you breake the Lords decree and ordinances eſtabliſhed in his Church. VVherefore to make an end of this part, it appertaineth to their honours (as they vvil anſwer before God at the dreadfull day of iudgement) to root out all proud, inſolent, & ambitious members from the Church and Common-vvealth, vviſely and diligently to plant, vviſe, modeſt, ſober, and ſound gouernors; in both to provide that every one,

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according to the grace receiued, occupy his talent: that in the Church they ſhred off all ſuch ſuperfluous members, and ſupply the vvants out of the vvord: that they avoyd confuſion, and preſerue it from deſtruction: that they ſeek for unity in one onely head Ieſus Chriſt, and in the continuall practiſe of his lawes. Finally, that they baniſh all idle perſons from the Citty of God, and compel every member by loue to ſerue the whole body. If they do this, then they ſhal ſee the Church of Chriſt to appeare to bee ſuch a one as Chriſt deſcribeth her to be in the Song of Songs, and as ſhe vvas in her yong and tender age in the time of the Apoſtles: If not, I am to conclude thus: *O England, England,* that thou knoweſt thoſe things vvhich belong unto thy peace, but now thy are hidden from thine eyes. Thus much of the generall law appertaining to all.

Now followeth the ſpeciall law appertaining to ſome: *Seing then We haue gifts that are divers, according to the grace that is given unto us, Whether We haue propheſie, let us propheſie, according to the proportion of faith: or an office, let us wait upon the office.* This ſpeciall law concerneth onely ſuch as be publike perſons in the Church, vvhereas the former touched all in generall. And as by the former, all men vvere charged to content themſelues vvith their ſeuerall callings and gifts: ſo by this, publick perſons are charged to abide in their ſeuerall callings, as in their ſeuerall ſtanding places, without breaking upon the functi-

ons of others, or envying their gifts: and therefore he doth not mention any extraordinary, but onely ordinary gifts, wherein men muſt abide to the comming of Chriſt, and which we muſt onely deſire.

VVhere he ſaith, *Seing then, &c.* wee note that the Apoſtle taketh it for a certain and an infallible rule, that the Lord had eſtabliſhed and already given theſe divers gifts unto his Church. For he ſaith, *According to the grace which is given unto us*, And when he ſaith, *that whether We haue propheſie, or an office, let us abide therein.* Hee giveth a plaine commandement, and a perpetuall law unto the Church, to retaine and keep them for ever to publick perſons or officers, to ſerue the Church in them: to private men, to make their profit of them. That God gaue them, it is manifeſt alſo in other places. Epheſians 4. chapter the 11. and 12. verſes. *Chriſt aſcending gaue ſome to bee Apoſtles, ſome Prophets, ſome Evangeliſts*, to plant the Church, *ſome Paſtors and Doctors* to keep it for ever, Againe. 1. *Cor.* 12. 28: verſe. *God hath ordayned in the Church, firſt Apoſtles, ſecondly Prophets*, both for a time. Thirdly Teachers, Helpers and Governors to rule the Church unto the end.

Againe, *Paul* witneſſeth, that for the adding of that which was wanting, and namely for ordaining of Elders in every Citty: he left *Titus* in Creta, as hee alſo deſireth *Timothy* to abide at *Epheſus*, that hee might bee a meane to bring in Paſtors, Doctors, Elders,

Elders, Deacons, and VVidowes: for else to what purpose should he write of their offices? Therefore the Apostle may well take it for a received ground, whereof no man then doubted, that God had given divers gifts for the continuall and perfect governement of his Church (for here he saith they had received them by grace) so that upon this ground hee buildeth this generall commandement, which he applieth severally to every particular calling here mentioned.

VVhere hee saith, *According to the grace given mee*: obserue two things: first, that every Ecclesiasticall calling, must haue ioyned with it, some singular grace of God: secondarily, that every of these functions here named, are the severall gifts of the mercy of God (as the word signifieth) most bountifully bestowed upon the Church. Wherefore if any abuse these, hee abuseth the liberality and bounty of God: if any take these offices upon him, not adorned with that grace, which God hath annexed to them, hee dishonoreth the giver, and bringeth the giver into contempt. If any be an enemy to these, hee is an enemie to the grace of God?

Behold then, I beseech you, what wee do when wee speake of Pastors, Doctours, Eders, Deacons and VVidowes. Verily, verily, we in the person of God in the name of Christ beseech you, whereas wee haue authority to command you, to receiue these gifts. If you consider the gifts, they bee

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very neceſſary and profitable for you: yea they be the ſweet graces of God: if you reſpect the giver, he it is that hath given himſelfe for you: it is therefore no wiſdom to refuſe ſo good gifts of ſo loving a friend: hee giveth cheerefully, and plentifully powreth his benefits upon us, if we refuſe them, that ſhall bee ſuch unkindneſſe, as I am not able to expreſſe.

It followeth, *Whether wee haue propheſie, let us propheſie, &c.* Firſt he reduceth all the ordinary functions: which are ordayned in the Church, & which are perpetually to be retayned, for the happy ſucceſſe and preſervation thereof, unto two generall heads: that is to ſay, unto Prophets, and Officers, dividing either of them into their ſeverall branches, as ſhall appeare more plainly in the particular diſcourſe. In that hee ſaith, *Whether We haue propheſie*, by it hee meaneth not any ſingular gift, to foretell that which is to come: but an ordinary gift of interpreting the writings of the Prophets, and other Scripture, to the edification of the hearer. The Greeke Propoſition *Pro*, beeing ſometimes in the place of *Vpò*, the word doth well admit that ſignification, wherein it is uſed divers times in the new Teſtament. *I Would that yee all ſpake ſtrange languages, but rather that ye propheſied*, And again, *Wee know in part and We propheſie in part*. Now, that here it is ſo to be taken in that ſignification, it appeareth firſt, in that he retaineth it among the ordinary gifts: ſecondly, in that he tieth & limiteth

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it, to be moderated and ruled by the proportion of faith: thirdly, in that he commandeth the Prophet to abide in that calling: fourthly in that immediatly after, he divideth it into the office of the Doctor and Paſtor: all which, cannot agree with the gifts of foretelling things to come. For that is not ordinary, not alwayes limited, not alwayes to be retained, neither is it common to the Doctor and the Paſtor, therefore it muſt needs be thus expounded in this place, as we haue ſaid: ſo that the meaning is; he whom God hath called ſincerely to interpret his word, to the profit of his people. Let him abide in that function. For albeit that word is wanting in the Greeke text, yet either that, or ſome other of the like force muſt neceſſarily be underſtood, as the Greek Scholiaſt and and other writers do well note. But what is meant here, by *the proportion of faith?* To omit the opinions of men, I take it to bee the ſame which the Apoſtle before named. *The meaſure of faith*: and the meaning to be, as if he ſhould ſay: hee that is lawfully called by the Church, truly and purely to expound the Scriptures to the edification of the hearers: let him abide therein according to the proportion or meaſure of his gifts, which are given him to occupy and exerciſe in faith: for God hath given to ſome more, ſome leſſe yea, and ſometimes bleſſeth him that hath leſſe, more then him that hath more. Therefore every man being called, muſt abide therein, and occupy his proper talent and

gift,

gift, with all diligence and faith, to the edification of his owne flock. VVhereby we may plainely see, what a Prophet is. A prophet is a member or Minister of the word of God, which abideth in the true and sincere interpretation thereof, to the edification of his owne peculiar flocke. So *Paul* chargeth the Bishops at Ephesus, to doe Acts-20. The word translated office, signifieth heere all other ordinary functions, besids the Pastour and doctour. In deede it is somtimes taken in Scripture generally for all Ecclesiasticall functions, and somtime applied to the ciuil Magistrate: but that it is not so taken here, it is manifest by the dis-jūctiue proposition, either of whose parts, cannot by anie rule of reason comprehend both. VVherfore as the Prophet hath to handle the word so the officer hath to handle not it, but other necessarie duties wherein he must also continue with diligence and fidelitie.

Let vs proceed to the seuerall branches. *Or he that teacheth on teaching.* These words as they shewe the office of the Doctour, wherin he must be continualie occupied, not breaking in vpon any other ciuill or ecclesiasticall calling: so they may teach vs together what a true Doctor and Teacher is, & how to define and distinguish him from all other ministers in the Church. A Doctor or Teacher is a Prophet, which trulie, soundly, and reuerently expounding the Canonicall scriptures, continueth in teaching true doctrine to his own people for the establishing of their

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mindes in the trueth. If any doubt of the trueth hereof, he may as well doubt of the Scriptures themselues, out of the which euery part thereof is drawen. For the Apostle here calleth the Doctor a Prophet: and that he must interpret the Canonical scriptures, it appeareth: first, by the 1. of *Pet.* 4. *Let him that speaketh, speake as the words of God.*

Secondly, because who knoweth not, that the Scriptures are given of the holy Ghost, and are sufficient to teach all trueth, and that the Church is built vpon this doctrine? Lastly, Christ sendeth vs to the the Scriptures, which, witnesse of him, and teacheth by them the trueth, and confuteth errours. Therefore the Doctors must onely expound the Canonicall Scriptures, not the Apocripha, or any mans writings. For the Lord will haue nothing brought into his holy assembly, but that which he hath appointed. And therefore albeit there were great corruption in the Sinagogues of the Iewes, yet the histories of the Acts of the Apostles declare, that nothing was read and expoũded in them but the law & the Prophets, not so much as the Chaldie Paraphrast. For as the prophets might not in calling the people together, blow any trumpets but those which were made & set apart for that purpose by the commandement of God, *Num.* 10.28. so ought not the ministers of God to expoũd or read openly in the congregation any writings, but onely the Canonicall Scriptures which the Lord hath set and sanctified for

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that vse. That he must do it properly, purely, & reuerētly, appeareth by *Peter* before cited, he must speak as the words of God *Paul* testifieth that he speake as concerning Christ as of sinceritie, as of God, as in the sight and presence of God. 2. Cor. 2. 17. That he must bee diligent and continue in teaching, the generall law proveth it. Last of all, that he must do it to his own people, the word it selfe proveth; for there is a necessary relation between the Teacher and the Learner, the Doctor and the Disciple. How can hee teach except hee haue Disciples? how can those be his disciples, which do neither heare him, nor learne of him? The reason why he must doe it diligently, to plant and establish his Disciples mind in the truth, is because we are very dull to conceiue & learn: & although lecture be upon lecture, doctrine upon doctrine, here a little and there a little, yet we shall remaine ignorant, and proceed slowly, if the truth bee not soundly beaten in to our heads. Again, because by this means the Pastor shall haue more time in exhorting and applying his exhortation to the present necessity of the people. But if any say, is this all to teach the truth to his people by expounding the Scriptures; Must hee not also confute errours, and stop the mouth of the adversarie? No doubt hee must. But wee must acknowledge here the wisdom of the holy Ghost, which meaneth here by teaching the truth, the confutation also of errour: for the rule of truth is also the rule of falsehood. For

as the light expelleth darkneſſe, ſo truth falſhood: and who is better able to confute errours, then he that knoweth the true meaning of the word. Thus you ſee what a true Teacher is, and wherein his whole function conſiſteth. There remaineth nothing but to giue him ſchollers, and to ſet him on worke: for as the doctor muſt cõtinue in true, ſound, and pure doctrine: ſo his Schollers muſt ſearch diligently (according to the example of the noble men in the *Acts* 17) whether his doctrine be true or not: whether it be ſoundly & purely gathred out of the word or not. As hee is reuerently to handle the word, ſo they muſt reuerently receiue it, as from the mouth of God.

The next branch or ſpeciall, which Chriſt hath giuen to his church, is the gift of exhortation, els-where called the Paſtor: who as the Teacher is occupied about the reaſonable part of the minde, therein to plant the true knowledge and ſound doctrine: ſo he is occupied about that part, wherein the affections haue their abode, to bring the hart and will to continuall obedience of the trueth: which is ſo much more neceſſary then the other, by how much the Lord is more delighted with obedience, then with naked & bare knowledge. The diſcription of the Paſtor and his office, is this. A Paſtor is a Prophet that vpon ſound doctrine grounded vpon the ſincere interpretation of the Scripture, continueth in exhortation wiſely applied to the preſent vſe, neceſſitie, and edification of his

people,

people, and in the administration of the Sacraments: all the parts whereof may appeare in this sort. Doctrine is the ground, every exhortatiõ not builded thereon is fruitlesse & weak, and vanisheth away as smoke in the wind, though it be zealous, yet it is blind and without knowledge. As the Scriptures are able to instruct the Doctor with all knowledge in teaching: so the Pastor in exhorting, improving and correcting. It is certaine that obedience is the end of exhortation, and that faith is the mother of obedience, and that faith leaneth onely upon the VVord: Rom. 12. Hebrewes, 11.4.7.8.17. 27.28. Moreover the Steward of the Lords house, must be not onely faithfull: Luk. 12. 41. but also wise to giue his servants their portion in due time. The Lords children are not all of one age and strength, and therefore their spirituall Father must feed some with milke, and some with stronger meat, according to their severall necessitie. The divider of the VVord must cut it aright. 2. Tim. 2. 15. The Pastor being a learned scribe, is like the wise housholder which hath filled & furnished all his treasure houses with all store of new and old. Exhortation must be applied to all estates, high, low, rich, poore, bond and free, learned and unlearned. The Pastor must not onely lead his sheep into pleasant and holesome Pastures, but also to heal the sick, to bring home the strayes, to strengthen the weak, Ezechiel 34.4. that all these duties are to bee done continually in

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his owne proper place, whereunto the Lord hath called him, it is manifeſt by the reaſon before vſed: were ſhould the ſhepheard bee occupied, but where his ſheepe are; where ſhould the watchman watch, but where his cittty and towne is? the ſpirituall enemies of our ſoule are many, ſtrong, mighty, malicious, vigilant, ſubtill, and full of deceit: the ſheepe of the green Paſture, few, weake, feeble, ſimple, euill, vnwiſe: therefore their Keeper and defender had need alwaies to be among them, to know their waies, to ſee their going out, and their comming in. That hee may the better, going before them in al ſound doctrine and godlines, keepe them in Chriſt, & defend them from their enemies? he muſt hearken unto the voyce of Chriſt, *Feed, feed, feed*, he muſt be inſtant in ſeaſon and out of ſeaſon, and therefore continually abide with his flock: which to do, as it is a moſt profitable duty both for the Paſtor and flock, ſo to leaue the flock as many do, and feed & watch where they haue no flock, is moſt hurtful to both: & therfore all ſuch roving Paſtors are by cords to be tied to their own people. As before, teaching contained the whole duty of the Doctor: ſo here exhorting (by a figure) ſignifieth all the duties of a Paſtor. For he exhorteth the weak ones to take cõfort by the ſweet mercies & promiſes of *God*: the good he exhorts to proceed, partly by the *feare of Gods iudgments*, & partly by the *loue of his mercies*. The wicked he exhorteth to repentance by laying before them the eternall and ſevere

iudgements and curſes of God, and the multitude and greatneſſe of their ſins. So that thoſe are but meanes to whet his exhortation, that it may pierce and enter in, even to the dividing of the ſoule and the ſpirit.

Now I beſeech you conſider, firſt the wiſedome and mercy of God, in providing for the people. Mans ſoule hath two parts, reaſon or the mind, the heart or the affections. By the fall of *Adam*, there is in the minde, darkneſſe and ignorance of the will of God: in the heart there is nothing but rebellion and enmity againſt him: ſo that the ſcripture hath iudged us to be by nature the children of darkneſſe, and the ſonnes of rebellion. Now the Lord in wiſedom and mercy hath given to his Church, remedies to cure theſe diſeaſes. Firſt a Doctor, who by heavenly wiſedome in interpreting the word, is able (the ſpirit working by his miniſtery) to tranſlate us from the kingdom of darknes, to the kingdome of light and knowledge: then the Paſtor, whom he hath ordained to ſubdue and tame the rebellious motions of our hearts, and make them obedient to the will & truth of God. O the unſpeakeable wiſedome and mercies of God, who to caſt down the ſtrong holds of ignorance and rebellion, which by nature poſſeſſed our ſoules, hath given the miniſteries of the Paſtor & Doctor, which being given of the king of kings, and prince of princes, in the day of his coronation, when he led his enemies in triumph, to ſhew the the glory of his kingdome, and his princely

power

power, can neither be thought to be small, neither lightly regarded, without great dishonour unto the giver, who hath not left us destitute, as we see of any gift necessary for our soules health.

He that distributeth, in distributing with simplicity. From the Ministers of the word, hee commeth to the other officers, which haue charge either of a part of the congregation, as Deacons and Attenders upon the sicke: or of the whole as Elders, shewing that these as they are divers gifts from the other, so they are very necessary in their place and roome. The first is the Deacon, called there the distributer, whereby appeareth his office and function what it is. For a Deacon is an officer which continueth in distributing the common liberality of the Church, according to the necessity of all the poore members thereof. The first part is plaine in this text, that he is a distributer of the Church goods, appeareth in the 4. of the Acts, and 6. where many brought the price of their Lands and houses which they had sold, & laid the mony at the Apostles feet, to be distributed to every man as he had need. Now the Apostles, that they might the better attend unto preaching and praying, were upon necessary causes fain to giue over this charge unto other, called Deacons, whom the Church elected, as it is in *Acts* 6. Therefore this is the Deacons office, herein he must be occupied, to marke the necessity of the poore, and accordingly to distribute. Whereupon it followeth, that he

muſt know therfore their eſtate, their wealth, their charges, their cuſtome of ſpending, whether it bee much or little, or moderate, their trade of life, whether they be painfull or negligent therein: he may diſtribute with knowledge, wiſedome, iuſtice, fidelitie, ſimplicity, and without reſpect of perſons. All men cannot do this, and it is neceſſary that ſome ſhould do it: therefore leſt the children of God ſhould in beſtowing their liberality & almes, behaue themſelues diſorderedly, ſpilling where they ought to ſpare, and holding backe their hands where they ought to beſtow: it pleaſed our mercifull father, to eaſe a great many, and to lay the burden upon a few faithful wiſe men, full of the holy Ghoſt, that all things in the Church might be done orderly and uprightly in the ſight of God. Thus we ſee the neceſſity of theſe Officers, by whoſe labour and godly care, the ſick, the ſtrangers, or other Saints, unable to earne their owne livings by the ſweat of their browes, might be honeſtly maintained by the liberality and bountifulneſſe of their brethren, unto whom God hath given abundance for the ſupply of their want, in ſuch ſort there ſhould be as it was foretold by the Prophet, and to bee ſeen in the primitiue Church no beggar in Iſrael.

He that ruleth with diligence. By the Ruler hee meaneth all thoſe that governed the Church, whereof ſome labour both in word and government, as the Paſtors and Doctors; ſome onely in governement, as the

Elders

Elders called by the common name, as *Paul* in 1. *Timoth*. 5. 17. Theſe Elders are Church officers or Cenſors of manners, who by correcting and admoniſhing the unruly, and encouraging the good, prevented offences, and continued in ruling and governing the Church which depended upon them. Their office was chiefly in aſſiſting the Paſtors and Doctors, in admoniſhing the unruly ſeverally, by comforting the feeble minded, by preventing of offences which otherwiſe might ariſe: in ſuſpending the unworthy from the Sacraments, in excommunicating of the obſtinate, in abſoluing the repentant, in ordaining and remouing Church officers: finally, in handling and deciding all ſuch matters and controverſies in doctrine or maners, as belong and appertaine to *Eceleſiaſticall* government.

The proofe of all which particular duties, I cannot (for lack of time) ſtand upon, onely I will quote the places of Scripture, *Math*. 22. 24. 25. *Math*. 18. 17. 1. *Tim*. 4. 14. *Acts*. 15. 6. & 22. *Acts*. 16. 4. *Acts* 21. 18. & 20. 2. And therefore theſe being ſet over us in matters pertaining unto God, wee muſt both acknowledge and obey them, with ſingular loue and reverence, becauſe they watch for our ſoules, 1. *Theſſ*. 5. I haue much to ſay of the office & neceſſity of theſe offices, how needfull they are for the ſuppreſsing of errors, ſchiſmes, ſects, and hereſies, for the bridling of the luſt and pride of life, for the correcting of the unruly, and the

preferring of the worthy, and in all wisdome, grauitie, and vprightnes, as lightes to shine vnto the Church, that they may the clearer see, how to walk in the waies of the iust. But a long treatise is scarcely sufficient for this discourse, & my time is almost spent. I may not now stand to shew the differēce between all these offices, certaine it is, that they are diuers giftes, and distinguished one from another. Let men beware how they confound those thinges which God hath distinguished. For the Elder and Deacon (because that wil more shew their offices) they differ thus: the Deacon hee is occupied onely about the the poore, the Elder about all: the Deacon distributeth, the Elder admonisheth: the deacon obserueth the pouertie of the Saints in bodilie thinges: the Elder noteth manners, and conuersation: the Deacon searcheth how the Church goods receiued are spent: the Elder noteth howe euery one laboureth in his owne calling. VVherby it commeth to passe, that as the Deacons, can make true report to the Church of the state of the pore, so the Elders of the state of all. By which wise gouernment, it would, in part come to passe, which the prophets foretell: *that the polluted should haue no passage into the Church, that no noisome beast bee found there, that the redeemer of the Lord may walke in peace.* Finally, the deacons take heed that no idle person be nourished in the company of the pore: the Elders care is, to see that no vncleane person remaine in the bosome of the Church,

whereof

whereof redoundeth no ſmall commoditie, both to the Church and Common-wealth.

The laſt gift is, the *Shewing of mercie with cheerefullnes*. This was the proper office of thoſe, which beeing relieued by the Church, were apointed to looke vnto the pore which were weake and ſicke, and the poore ſtranger. So that a ſhewer of mercie is he, or rather ſhee (for the companions of ſuch as executed this duty, conſiſted eſpecially of widdowes) which by the Gouernours of the Church, and conſent of the people, was appointed to help the pore impotent, and pore ſtrangers in thoſe duties wherein they could not well helpe themſelues, hauing neither frends nor kinſefolke to help them. A verie neceſſary functiō, eſpecially in time of perſecution or grievous ſicknes, when the church hath many impotent perſons, in which time ſuch order is to be taken, that none of the mēbers of Chriſt, for whō he hath ſhed his precious bloud, periſh for lack of looking to, nor want any attending which they may haue, and it is meet they ſhould. Theſe miniſters of the poore, their age, qualities, office, & conditions, are declared of *Paul*, 1. *Tim*. 5. By the diligent, continual and cheerful performance of thoſe offices, theſe whom the Lord ſeemeth to haue a ſpeciall and ſingular care of, (namely the widows and fatherleſſe and all impotent perſons) ſhould be moſt charitably & godlely provided for. The wāt of theſe officers mercifull companies, is the cauſe of the death and periſhing of many a poore fatherles

child, impotent persons, and sicke ones, who are ready often, euen to die in the streets, as I my selfe haue seene and heard credibly reported, & that, as to my grief, so to the great infamy of all Christian professors of the Gospell: a matter therefore of those that bee in authority to be looked vnto. I graunt there be many good lawes and statutes enacted for the prouision of the pore, but we se by experience, that the Lord will not blesse & giue good successe thereunto. For (notwithstanding these statutes) wee haue swarmes of beggers poore and impotent, till we haue by authoritie established in euery Congregation these eternall decrees of Christ, touching the gouernment of his Church. For the want of this gouernment, as I take in hand to proue, is the chiefe and principall cause of all the euils that are perpetuallie in our Church. For if it bee demaunded, why there is in the land such grosse ignoraunce of GOD; The answere is at hand, wee want Doctors and Teachers. VVhence come such swarmes of Atheistes, Idolaters, Papists, erronious and hereticall sectaries, of the Family of loue and such like? there are no Doctors to teach, nor Pastors to exhorte. How commeth it to passe, that in a Christian Church, professing newnesse of life, and the doctrine of regeneratiõ, there should be such a huge masse of old and detestable workes, of coniuring, witchcraft, sorcery, charming, blaspheming the holy name of God, swearing and for-swearing, prophaning of the Lords

Saboaths

Saboaths, disobedience to superiours, contempt of inferiours: murther, slaughter, roberies, adultery, fornication, couenantbreakers, false-witnesse-bearing, liars, with all other kindes of uniuersall dealing one with another? Is not the cause euident? wee lacke Elders and gouernours of euery congregation to admonish, correct, suspend and excomunicate such noisome, hurtfull, and monstrous beastes, out of the house of God, without respect of persons. VVhy haue we so many poore, so many feeble, and weake readie to die amongst vs? we want deacons and merciful men, which should faithfully distribute to the necessitie of the Saints, and willingly and cheerefully attend vpon the impotent. which are vnable to helpe them selues. O what fruit might be reaped by these seuerall vocations, if the werey set vp & established in euerie congregation; without all controuersie the benefites that would redound to vs, and this Land thereby are innumerable: no tongue can expresse them. For hereby her gratious Maiestie and her Honorable counsell, might truely know within a short time by name, who and how many enemies they are (a very fewe subtill hypocrites excepted) to religion and the Common-wealth. How many obstinate, malicious, and traiterous Papists, how many Anabaptists, Libertins, how many of the Family of loue, how many Atheists, how many vnruly and inordinate walkers, which then might bee punished according to their faults: whereas now Archbishops,

biſhops, Biſhops, Arch-deacons, Comiſſaries, Officials, having contrary to the word of God, pulled the raines of government from the Elders, ruine and deſtruction is feared but not auoided. Not one enemy of an hundreth, is known of the greater part, and yet there be no ſecret enemies then the wiſeſt and moſt prouident can think of. Hereby all all the ſecret & miſchieuous deuiſes againſt her Majeſties royall perſon, againſt religion, and the whole eſtate, might eaſily be tried & ſearched out, by the diligent & wiſe ſearch of the Elders in every Church: whereas now, did not the Lord ſometimes moſt wonderfully, for the ſingular care hee hath over her Counſell, bring them to light, wee ſhould haue been often ere now ſwallowed up by theſe ſecret underminings of the common peace and ſtate. Hereby we ſhould know certainly, who be thoſe that ſo prodigally maintain ſuch as haue been bloudy butchers and murtherrs of Gods people, remaining as yet enemies to the Goſpell, and falſe hearted to her Maieſtie: whereas now ſome of them haue ſecurely boaſted (as I am able to iuſtifie) iudge you of the reſt, that they haue had greater reuenewes, being Priſoners in the Tower and other places, then when they were Abbots and rich Prelats in the land: and yet no man knoweth how they come by them, nor of whom they receiue them. How much then, think you, is all that is beſtowed this way in one yeare, you may geſſe by this annuall receit

of

of ſome one man? Hereby might eaſily in time bee prevented all ſecret conſpiracies, For what ſoever conſpiracy were begun in any Town or Cittie, it would eaſily in the beginning, long before the flame thereof, be eſpied of ſuch wiſe and graue men, as now in ſome congregations may, and after teaching and exhorting, might in many mo be appointed: and ſuch attempts either by Eccleſiaſticall cenſure, or civill correction of the Magiſtrate bee altogether quenched: ſo that our gracious Prince, her honorable Counſell, and the whole land might liue in much more ſafty and ſecurity, then now they do, and haue greater aſſurance of the merciful protectiō of the Almighty, then now they haue. Hereby all godly laws Eccleſiaſticall & civill, ſhould either univerſally be kept of all, or elſe the breakers come under ſuch civill & Eccleſiaſticall punishments as they ſhould deſerue, which were a ſingular meam to breed in the hearts of the ſubiects, a pure feare & loue to their Prince and other Magiſtrates. VVhereas now good lawes are tranſgreſſed and no man accuſed: the Lord is not truly worſhipped, the Prince of ſome not in unfaigned ſimplicty reverenced, nor with good will frō the hart beloved of them. Finally, hereby the Paſtors and Doctors ſhould, having a true relation from their Seniors, touching the eſtate of their flock, bee much more fruitfully occupied in teaching and exhorting, for they might with all knowledge and wiſedom, deliver unto every one that which were fit moſt to

draw

draw him to GOD, and his eternall ſalvation. Seeing therefore that the eſtabliſhing this gratious governement of God, will banniſh and chaſe away all noiſome beaſts out of the Lords vineyard: ſeing it will bee ſuch a ſingular mean to preſerue and maintain the peace and ſecurity of the Common-wealth, and all eſtates therein: finally, ſeeing it maketh very much, both for religion and godly pollicy, and is a moſt deare friend to both, for the loue of your Common-wealth & the Church I beſeech you all to entertain this Chriſtian government of the Church of Chriſt, whereof hee himſelfe is the author and no man. Two things remaine which I purpoſe to determine, Firſt, that this government is perpetuall: ſecondly, that it is onely ſufficient: wherein I cannot for lacke of time be long, and therefore, will briefly ſet down the reaſons of both.

For the firſt, I proue thus. For this ſpeciall commandement, touching the practiſe and exerciſe of the gifts, beſides that it is the commandement of God drawn out of the generall law: it chargeth all theſe officers to abide in their offices, therefore they are perpetuall.

Secondly, all theſe officers are called here the true members of the body of the Church therefore the Church being to endure to the comming of Chriſt, theſe alſo muſt be of the ſame continuance, except you will ſay, that Chriſt is pleaſed better with a maimed body, then a perfect one.

Thirdly,

Thirdly, *Paul* commandeth *Timothy* to keep this government unto the comming of Christ, 1. Tim. 6.

Fourthly, all the things where about they are occupied, as the ignorances, and errors of the mind, the corruptions of the heart, the unrulineſſe of men, the poverty of Saincts, and impotency of the pore, are alwayes to be looked unto and cared for. Therfore the offices of God appointed and ordayned for theſe purpoſes, are perpetuall.

Fiftly, Chriſt the King & governour of his Church, muſt rule it till the comming of himſelfe by his own offices and lawes, therefore this is perpetuall.

For the ſecond, Firſt wee are commanded here to content our ſelues with theſe, & to reſt in them, therefore theſe are onely ſufficient.

Secondly, theſe doe make the man and Church of God perfect to every good work as it is in the 4. to the Epheſians and elſewhere, therefore theſe onely are ſufficient.

Thirdly, if theſe be not ſufficiēt, then Chriſt can not be glorified, as perfect governour of his Church, neither his word is ſuch, but that ſomething may be added, both which are abſurd: therefore they onely are ſufficient: if not who dare add a member to that body, which he neither made, nor can make.

Fourthly, theſe functions onely are ſufficient, which haue all the gifts needfull for the miniſtery of the word and Sacraments, and for the Governement of the Church:

but

but all theſe functions are ſufficient for theſe ends: therefore onely theſe are ſufficient.

Fiftly, if any erect new Miniſteries, he muſt either giue new gifts, or aſſure men, that they ſhall haue new gifts of God: but none can do thus: therefore theſe onely are ſufficient.

Sixtly, if men may add, they may detract: but the ſecond is falſe, therefore the firſt.

Seing then theſe things are ſo as hath been ſet forth, out of the word of God, that this is his order, to wch all ought to bow their backs every one keeping his proper place, and none intruding upon the right & intereſt of another: ſeing ſuperfluous things ought to be cut off, & ſuch offices as are frō Antichriſt, ought to be abandoned: let us every one in our places, pray to our God that he will pitty this his poore Church, that truth & righteouſnes may kiſſe each other that his ſcepter may floriſh, the ſtif-necks of the obſtinate, and the Iron ſinewes of the rebellious may be bowed and broken, to the end theſe confuſions that appeare euery where: this pompous pride and curſed ambition, enemy to all ſincerity, good order, and true religion, may ceaſe: and onely the glory and victory of Chriſt, our onely King, Prophet, and Prieſt, may be eſtabliſhed: to whom with the Father and the holy Ghoſt three perſons and one eternall God, bee all praiſe, glory, and honor, now and for euer, *Amen.*

FINIS.

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